

Mr. Chairman, this resolution represents the third time in as many years that the House has brought needless legislation to the floor to "protect" the Pledge of Allegiance. At a time when we should be discussing issues of great consequence, like the genocide occurring in Sudan, the implementation of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, and the use of our federal surface transportation dollars, the House leadership has again decided to bring up this stale topic. This time, however, the legislation is not simply frivolous; it is downright dangerous.

This bill, which will purportedly protect the Pledge of Allegiance, is the continuation of a reckless and destructive pattern to strip courts of their ability to determine the constitutionality of the Pledge of Allegiance. This is an outrageous assault on our fundamental constitutional framework. Personally, I do not think individual liberties are threatened by the words "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance. Regardless, this remains a decision that should be made in federal courts--not here in Congress. The very notion of this legislation is unconstitutional. It should be fundamentally and decisively rejected today.